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INTRODUCTION

by David Curzon, Chief
Central Evaluation Unit

This issue of the Evaluation Bulletin concentrates on two concerns: the role of non-governmental organizations as partners of the United Nations and evaluation methodologies. On the role of NGOs, the articles call attention to the dynamics involved in forging successful cooperative links with NGOs, and the benefits of exploring a potential which is often overlooked. In the section on methodologies, we cover in this issue of the Bulletin analysis of press coverage of United Nations activities and operations, the experience of ILO in evaluating operational activities and the complementarity between in-depth and self-evaluations. Self-evaluation is not a luxury to undertake when time is available but should be considered an integral part of programme management.

The Central Evaluation Unit would like to thank all contributors to this issue, as well as those who have provided unattributed material for its preparation.

We invite readers to send us comments; a Readership Survey form is provided on the last page.

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THE ROLE OF NGOS IN THE UNITED NATIONS

Introduction

by Frank Owarish

The United Nations is undergoing an unprecendented restructuring to adapt itself to the realities of the world in the post Cold War era. Its activities have changed markedly in the recent years. While in the past, the bulk of the activities of the United Nations Organization was carried out at headquarters, the recent trend shows that more and more activities are being undertaken in the field. The United Nations has always had a programme of technical assistance geared to the needs of the developing countries as well as sizeable humanitarian assistance programmes which are field-oriented. These programmes continue and are increasingly becoming multifaceted and interrelate with new programmes aimed at peace keeping, peace making and peace building. The United Nations Organization has been going through a significant downsizing to become 'lean and efficient' and to increase its effectiveness. In the new world context, the United Nations is being asked to undertake much more than ever before with less resources. In addition to increasing its efficiency and effectiveness, the United Nations should increasingly look into partnership with governmental and non-governmental organizations. The latter include universities and many professional organizations as well as private sector organizations. It is worth noting that:

"The United Nations, from its inception, has recognized that non-governmental organizations have an important and constructive role in furthering the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and in contributing to and supporting the Organization's work" 1/

Article 71 of the Charter provides that 'the Economic and Social Council may make suitable arrangements for consultations with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence'.

Over the years, non-governmental organizations have made a valuable contribution to the work of the of the United Nations by drawing attention to issues, suggesting ideas and programmes, and disseminating information to promote an informed understanding about its aims and activities.

"Increasingly, in their resolutions, the main organs of the United Nations and their subsidiary organs call upon non-governmental organizations to participate in and contribute to programmes and activities. As a result, both the volume and the complexity of co-operative arrangements between non-governmental organizations and Secretariat units have expanded" 2/.

"In several recent cases, non-governmental organizations have strengthened United Nations capability in extending humanitarian assistance to suffering people around the world". Boutros Boutros Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations (SG/SM/4806, of I/772 9 September 1992)

1/POLICIES AND PROCEDURES GOVERNING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT (ST/SGB/209 OF 21 DECEMBER 1984) para. 1

2/Ibid., paragraph 2

Definition of a non-governmental organization

A non-governmental organization (NGO) refers to a non-profit citizen's voluntary entity organized nationally or internationally. Thus, professional associations, foundations, trade unions, business associations, religious organizations, omen's and youth groups, cooperative associations, development and human rights organizations, environmental protection groups, research institutes dealing with international affairs and association of parliamentarians are consiered non-governmental organizations.

Non-governmental organizations are diverse in structure, methods of work and financing. While some NGOs are national, others are international in membership and/or scope of their activities. They may be federations having a number of affiliates located in different regions or nations, embracing thousands of members, with a well-defined structure, policy-making mechanism and channels of communication. Others may be groups of experts, associations of outstanding individuals, academic institutions or research institutes. National organizations may be part of a defined international structure; others may operate internationally without being affiliated with an international organization.

The primary activities of some NGOs are in the information and education field; others are operational and are directly engaged in technical projects, relief, refugee or development programmes.

Non-governmental organizations maybe financed through membership dues, assessment of affiliates, voluntary contributions, subsidies from Governments, or combination of these. Some receive support for specific projects on an ad hoc or contract basis from private sources, foreign aid groups or from intergovernmental organizations.

(Source: DPI Information Note 85-45244, 10 April 1985)

NGO Unit, Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development

(a) Location

This very important unit, previously part of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs then of the Department of Ecoconomic and Social Development is now part of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development.

(b) Functions

The functions of the NGO Unit, which are based on Article 71 of the Charter of the United Nations and on Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) can be divided into three main components, namely,

(i) acting as substantive secretariat of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations and of related meetings including preparation of all required documentation,
(ii) assisting the Committee and the Council in ensuring the full implementation of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) on arrangements for consultations with non-governmental organizations and
(iii) acting as a focal point within the United Nations Secretariat for the provision of advice and information to Secretariat officials, the United Nations system, States members of the United Nations and outside users, with regard to non-governmental organizations.

From time to time the Unit is also called upon to provide services to ad hoc international conferences and meetings related to the contribution and participation of non-governmental organizations.

(c) Consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Unit, before formally submitting an application to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, undertakes a preliminary review of applications to ensure that the non-governmental organizations fulfil the criteria of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV). This gives rise to necessary correspondence and consultation to gather information for an assessment of the suitability of particular NGOs for consultative status with ECOSOC. In addition, the Unit provides advisory services to NGOs on procedures and the preparation of applications.

The Unit deals also with NGOs requesting consultative status by virtue of a similar relationship with a specialized agency or a United Nations body, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 19 of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

The Unit provides the history of each organization seeking reclassification in order to ascertain the accuracy of the information it supplies in support of its claim to placement in a higher category.

•••

The NGO Unit/DPCSD
United Nations, DC2-2340
New York, NY 10017
Telephone numbers: 212-963-4842/4843/4846/4663
Fax: 212-963-4324

Note: The Editor conveys his thanks and appreciation for the assistance provided by Ms. Farida Ayoub, Chief of the NGO Unit, DPCSD in the compilation of the background information.

(i) Consultative status category I

It should be recalled that organizations which are concerned with most of the activities of the Council and can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that they have marked and sustained contributions to make to the achievement of the objectives of the United Nations and are closely involved with the economic and social life of the peoples of the areas they represent and whose membership is both considerable and broadly representative of major segments of population in a large number of countries are known as organizations in general consultative status category I.

(ii) Consultative status category II

Organizations which have a special competence in, and are concerned specifically with, only a few of the fields of activity covered by the Council, and which are known internationally within the fields for which they have or seek consultative status are known as organizations in special consultative status category II.

(iii) Roster

NGOs which can make occasional and useful contributions to the work of ECOSOC or its subsidiary bodies are included on the Roster.

•••

Consultative status is granted by a decision of the Economic and Social Council on the recommendation of its Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, a standing Committee of ECOSOC composed of 19 Member States of the United Nations, meeting every two years. The Committee is composed of the following members elected for a four-year term of office beginning 1 January 1991: Burundi, Bulgaria, Chile, Cuba, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Ireland, Irag, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nicaragua, Oman, Philippines, Russian Federation, Sweden and Sudan.

•••

NGOs which have been granted consultative status may sit as observers at public meetings of ECOSOC, its commissions, and other subsidiary organs, and submit written statements relevant to the work of ECOSOC, its commissions and subsidiary organs. In addition, NGOs in category I may propose the inclusion of items in the provisional agenda of ECOSOC and its commissions and request to be heard in the ECOSOC itself.

NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC have established NGO Committees to deal with issues of common interest. At present, there exists such NGO Committees in the following areas: Aging, Disarmament, Human Rights, Narcotics and Substance Abuse, Shelter and Community, Family, Southern Africa, Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Status of Women, Youth, Sustainable Development, Population, Indigenous Peoples, Freedom of Religion and Belief.

The NGO Unit/DPCSD organizes monthly meeting of the NGO Committees' chairpersons thus offering a forum for coordination of the Committees' activities.

•••

There are currently 950 NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. An updated list of NGOs in status will be issued in August 1993.

Association with the Department of Public Information

NGOs may alternatively or concurently become associated with the United Nations Department of Public Information.

The administrative arrangements for and servicing of NGOs in association with DPI are the responsibility of the Non-governmental Organizations Section of that Department. Requests for association are considered by a review committee composed of senior officials of the Department.

To be granted Association status with the Department of Public Information, non-governmental organizations must be of recognized national or international standing and must support the Charter of the United Nations.

The principal purpose of such association is the re-dissemination of information in order to increase public understanding of the work and achievements of the United nations and its bodies.

Organizations should, therefore, have a broadly based membership and the scope and resources to undertake effective information programmes. In the case of non-membership organizations such as research institutes or foundations, they should be international in orientation and have substantial public outreach.

At the United Nations headquarters, the Non-governmental Organizations Section of DPI operates a resource centre to which representatives of NGO in association status have access and through which they receive a variety of United Nations publications and documents that they use for informational purposes. In addition, the Non-governmental Organizations Section organizes regular briefings on topics of current interest for the benefit of representatives of NGOs having associated status.

Note: The Editor conveys his thanks and appreciation for the assistance provided by Mr. Eric Wong in the compilation of the background information.

How the two sets of partners work together may vary from programme to programme. The following are illustrations of possible working arrangements.

The UNHCR-NGO Partnership

by Frank Owarish */

An increasing number of international NGOs deal with refugee and refugee-related issues in their own capacity, from questions of protection to those of humanitarian assistance. A number of these undertake activities in a multi-faceted fashion while some are specialized in some specific humanitarian aspects. Several of the international NGOs also cooperate with UNHCR, some of them concentrating on functions of advocacy, some on public information and some on fund-raising; several of them fulfill all three of these functions in an interrelated manner. NGOs which offer services directly to refugees are encouraged to coordinate with UNHCR in order to avoid any duplication of activities and ensure a more efficient allocation of scarce resources.

International NGOs therefore play an important role in international protection as provided for in various international and regional instruments. Several of them are also the operational partners of UNHCR and as such participate in the design and implementation of assistance programmes.

UNHCR maintains regular contacts with umbrella federations of NGOs, such as the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), INTERACTION and the European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE).

There are also grassroot NGOs which cooperate with UNHCR both in the protection function and that of assistance limited to a specific national setting; again several of these perform as the operational partners of UNHCR often with technical and administrative backstopping of the latter.

NGOs are thus able to participate in needs assessment, programme planning and design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of assistance programmes. NGO staff are regularly invited to attend various UNHCR training courses and workshops to strengthen the operational capabilities of their organizations.

Since 1988, UNHCR has maintained a list of NGOs with the purpose of maximizing the use of their expertise. In 1989, there were 214 international and local NGOs implementing UNHCR projects in 76 countries. The list was converted by UNHCR into a database on NGO operational expertise so as to be able to select specific NGOs for specific situation where a particular operational expertise is needed and for those not involved as implementing partners on their potential for activities in advocacy, fund raising, preventive action, public information/education,development and grassroots networking.

UNHCR has a Liaison Section with Non-Governmental Organization which aims at facilitating mutual working relationships. Through this mechanism UNHCR conducts regular briefings of the NGO community on refugee situations around the world often in cooperation with ICVA and the Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; in addition, an Electronic Information Network which provides the latest information on refugee situations should become fully operational shortly.

*/The views expressed are not necessarily those of the United Nations.

NGOs also participate in the Executive Committee of UNHCR and its sub-committees and groups. An important mechanism is the NGO-UNHCR Pre-Executive Committee Annual Meeting attended by over 150 NGOs and the annual NGO-UNHCR consultations on questions of protection and operation. Within this spirit of partnership, a group of experts from the major NGOs cooperated with staff of UNHCR to develop the Guidelines on Refugee Children at Risk providing thereby the basis for a common approach between UNHCR and the NGO community on this important issue. UNHCR also supported the International NGO Consultation on Refugee Women organized under the auspices of the World Council of Churches as well as various other joint ad hoc consultative groups.

Representatives of NGOs are also regularly invited to participate in international conferences on refugee and refugee-related issues as observers; they generally contribute through (i) making inputs to the preparatory work (ii) making statements at the conferences and (iii) assisting in implementing the plans of actions adopted.

NGOs have assisted UNHCR to enhance its emergency preparedness. An agreement developed between UNHCR and the Norwegian and Danish Refugee Councils under which the NGOs agree to maintain rosters of staff ready for immediate deployment by UNHCR in emergency situations and to second some 200 NGO personnel to UNHCR for such emergencies is an important means for improving UNHCR's responsiveness.

UNHCR has maintained contacts with development-oriented NGOs in order to familiarize and sensitize them to the development-dimension of the refugee problems.

By cooperating with international and local NGOs, UNHCR has thus been able to significantly increase its means of action. It would be recalled that UNHCR was originally set up as an international protection mechanism rather than an operational agency; the NGOs and national governmental agencies were the logical partners to complement UNHCR's means of action. Both UNHCR and the NGOs, in particular the umbrella ones, have worked constantly to improve their relationships within the framework outlined above. ICVA was able to raise funds for specific activities which allowed experienced staff from UNHCR and NGOs to develop the conceptual elements of the relationship. In 1990, UNHCR and ICVA initiated a series of consultations in the field and in Geneva which involved staff from some 200 NGOs (whether affiliated to ICVA or not) and 20 of UNHCR's Branch Offices world-wide culminating in 1991 in a Reference Document on Relationship between UNHCR and NGOs under the UNHCR-NGO Partnership umbrella. The document provides (i) a concrete definition of the basic elements of the partnership (ii) an outline of the common understanding of the two partners in the areas of protection, advocacy, early warning, assistance, repatriation, resettlement, refugee children, education, training, refugee participation, support to local NGOs and fund raising, and (iii) guidelines of the common understanding reached on criteria for selection of a non-governmental organization as an operational partner for UNHCR.

The working relationship of UNHCR and NGOs is dynamic, constructive and fruitful and provides an example for the executives and managers of other United Nations programmes to explore the opportunities and possibilities of similar cooperation. The Secretary-General himself has stressed the growing role of NGOs in helping the United Nations to meet the challenges ahead (see SG/SM/4754/Rev.1 of 20 May 1992).

NGO participation in the disarmament programme of the United Nations

prepared by the NGO Liaison Unit, Disarmament Programme, Department of Political Affairs

Non-governmental organizations have always played an important and active role in support of the United Nations' efforts in the field of arms control and disarmament.

In this connection, individual NGOs around the world as well as the two NGO umbrella organizations, namely the NGO Committees on Disarmament in New York and Geneva, maintain close contact and cooperation with the Office of Disarmament Affairs.

Every year, the NGO Committee on Disarmament in New York cooperates with the Office in organizing two NGO forums on disarmament-related issues, one during the regular session of the Disarmament Commission In April/May and the other during Disarmament Week in October. On both occasions, the forums have always been well attended, by representatives, of some 140-150 NGO. Similarly, the NGO Committee in Geneva cooperates with the Geneva Branch of the Office in organizing forums during the session period of the Conference on Disarmament and during the session period of the Conference on Disarmament and during Disarmament Week. Again, NGO representatives in Geneva have always actively participated in the forums.

In addition to co-organizing events with the Office, NGOs have also widely and actively participated in United Nations and other international disarmament conferences that are serviced by the United Nations Secretariat. Some examples of this include the third special session devoted to disarmament in 1988 which was attended by some 2,000 NGOs from around the world, 120 of whom spoke; the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held in Geneva in 1990 was attended by 44 organizations which were represented by 70 individuals; and the Amendment Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water that took place in New York in 1991, when some 160 NGO representatives attended and 34 of whom made a statement.

Human rights: NGOs and the United Nations

by Nigel S. Rodley, Reader in Law, Human Rights Centre, University of Essex

Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), especially the United Nations, have long acknowledged the contribution that NGOs can make to their own programmes. NGOs, in turn, have not hesitated to cooperate, seeing the IGOs as important partners both in seeking to stop actual human rights violations and in preventive work. It is perhaps in the latter area that the United Nations has been most productive. Standard-setting was the first area of United Nations activity when it embarked on the elaboration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The United Nations publication 'Human Rights -- A Compilation of International Instruments' reveals how extensive the process of standard-setting has been, in terms both of treaty instruments articulating specific legal obligations and of more hortatory instruments recommending rules by which States may more effectively ensure respect for broader human rights norms.

NGOs have been able to be actively involved in these norm-creating exercises. Indeed, it has sometimes been their activities that have demonstrated the need for the United Nations to take action. Furthermore, their consultative status has permitted NGOs to participate, without vote, in the drafting discussions. They can propose ideas for inclusions and can explain, on the basis of their experience, why those ideas need to be incorporated in the text. They can also approach the drafting Governments at the national level with a view to influencing the instructions given to their representatives in the drafting body. Prominent recent examples of such NGO participation are that of Amnesty International, the International Commission of Jurists and the International Association of Penal Law in the drafting of the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and that of a NGO group led by Defence for Children International in the drafting of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Another facet of United Nations preventive work is its programme of advisory services and technical assistance, which in recent years has undergone major expansion, especially since the establishment of a voluntary fund to finance it. The fund can, among other things, help Governments acquire the necessary training and resources to assist them to respect human rights. This can be useful to NGOs which are often asked by Governments for such assistance, or at least advice in obtaining it. At the same time, NGOs have pointed to the need to ensure that the advice and assistance programme is not exploited by Governments engaged in extensive human rights violations. There is room for greater cooperation between the United Nations and NGOs in this field. Also, both national and international NGOs could be more closely associated with devising and execution of services provided to Governments and to NGOs.

NGOs have long been conscious of the need to promote public awareness of human rights. Their work in the public documentation of human rights violations is a major contribution.

NGOs also engage in the dissemination of more general material such as international human rights standards and information about implementation machinery. The United Nations World Campaign for Human Rights initiated by the Centre for Human Rights promises new progress in this area, especially if it can harness the forces of other parts of the United Nations system, such as its network of information centres. The active involvement of United Nations specialized agencies, notably UNESCO, could also enhance the impact of the campaign. There is clearly room here for collaboration with NGOs, both in the development of relevant materials and in sharing distribution networks. The area of United Nations human rights activity of most concern to NGOs has come to be that of protection or implementation. Until some

20 years ago, such activity was virtually non-existent. The United Nations did not take up individual cases, ignored most situations of human rights violations, however serious, and did not even permit NGOs at United Nations meetings to document human rights violations, either orally or in writing. This is not the place to set down the arguably revolutionary recent developments in United Nations human rights procedures and proceedings, but it may be noted that there are now confidential and public procedures for considering serious situations (despite a regrettable absence of political will to ensure that all such situations attract the same degree of scrutiny). There are also thematic procedures for annual reporting on types of grave human rights violation, such as enforced or involuntary disappearances, summary and arbitrary executions, and torture, as well as for intervention on individual cases where such violations are threatened. Further, NGOs are now able to draw public attention to human rights violations at meetings of the Commission on Human Rights and its Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

Successive heads of the Human Rights Centre (and its predecessor Division) have acknowledged the preponderant role played by NGOs in furnishing the information on human rights violations that constitute the subject-matter of the various procedures.

A casual reading of the reports of the Commission and Sub-Commission and of the various working groups, rapporteurs and so on, confirms this to be the case. This is not surprising. Recalling the principal NGO objective of stopping human rights violations, it is clear that NGOs believe that the very credibility that made it necessary for the United Nations to be the body to articulate international human rights norms make it an appropriate body to monitor compliance with the norms it has set. Indeed, NGOs have played a notable role in promoting the establishment of the machinery and the enhancement of their own role within it. They may be expected to continue to seek to maintain the momentum.

(Excerpt from 'The work of non-governmental organizations in the world-wide promotion and protection of human rights' by Nigel S. Rodley, Bulletin of Human Rights 90/1, Centre for Human Rights, 1991, pages 90-91)

Consultation of NGOs in the evaluation of United Nations Programmes

by Frank Owarish

Experience shows that NGOs can make significant contribution in the evaluation of United Nations programmes

There are two in-depth evaluations in the preparation of which I was involved and in the context of which NGOs were consulted. These are the Human Rights Programme and the Programme on International Protection of and Assistance to Refugees. NGOs participate very actively in these two programmes (see stories above).

Several NGOs were consulted on issues to be considered in the design of evaluation questionnaires. Studies prepared by NGOs were also taken into consideration as well the documentation they presented to the policy making bodies of these two programmes. Furthermore, evaluation questionnaires were sent to the representatives of NGOs; the response rates were very good and the comments were very constructive. During structured interviews, more elaborate comments were secured.

In general, the NGO representatives showed in-depth knowledge and interest in the activities of these United Nations Programmes.

Panels of NGOs were set up to discuss preliminary findings and here again the contribution was significant.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are becoming more prominent participants in human resource development programmes around the world. United Nations system funding agencies such as UNICEF, UNFPA and UNHCR make considerable use of NGOs as executing agencies, and most large bilateral donors also use them more and more. NGOs cannot serve as executing agencies for UNDP projects under current regulations, but they are being increasingly used as subcontractors to specialized agencies or recipient governments. A recent UNDP circular urges the agencies to increase sub-contract work with NGOs, and UNDP is also exploring ways to simply its procedures to facilitate such involvement.

According to a World Bank typology, NGOs can be placed in five categories along a continuum from those serving public (common goal) ends to those pursuing private (market-oriented) purposes. The five categories are: community associations, policy advocacy groups, service-providers/intermediaries (the best known NGO type, playing various roles), contractors and cooperatives (profit-making but with equitable sharing of profits). Salmen, Lawrence & Eaves Paige. Between public and private: A review of non-governmental organization involvement in World Bank projects (World Bank, Country Economics Department, Public Sector Management and Private Sector Development Division, 1989, pages ii & iii).

The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in the United Nations */

Ralston Deffenbaugh, Executive Director,
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

(This paper is based upon a United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) lecture delivered on May 31, 1991 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The author, a human rights lawyer, served from 1985 to 1990 as the United Nations representative for the Lutheran World Federation, a non-governmental organization in category II consultative status. He was the First Vice-President of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Status (CONGO) with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). During Namibia's transition to independence in 1989-1990, he served as legal adviser to the Namibian Lutheran bishops and to the Council of Churches in Namibia.)

Introduction

This presentation is from the perspective of the representative of an international non-governmental organization, a church organization with strong development and human rights work.

The presentation will give a framework for understanding the role of NGOs in the United Nations system. Who are the NGOs? What are their possibilities in international affairs, especially within the UN? Aimed primarily at diplomats and UN Secretariat staff members, the presentation will give some examples of NGO work and impact, including ideas for how the target audience can work with NGOs and help NGOs help them.

*/The views expressed are not necessarily those of the United Nations

For much of the conceptual framework of the presentation, I am indebted to Margo Picken, now of the Ford Foundation and formerly the UN representative of Amnesty International, and to Virginia Saurwein, retired chief of the NGO Unit, DIESA.

The United Nations Community

There are, I submit, four parts to the United Nations community:

1. The Member States. This is after all, the United Nations. Despite the UN Charter's opening words -- "We the Peoples" -- the UN is an organization of sovereign states. Nations are the members, and nations have the vote.

2. The Secretariat. The Secretary-General and the UN staff implement the decisions of the member states. As we all know, good staff have an important role in formulating, shaping and carrying out good policies.

3. The Press. This is the lens through which the world sees the UN. Often it is even the lens through which the UN and its members see themselves. The press shapes perceptions, and thus shapes reality.

4. The Non-Governmental Organizations. This is part of the "We the Peoples" mentioned at the beginning of the UN Charter. The NGOs are people who have associated out of their own interests and commitments. They bring fresh ideas, information, and expertise into the UN system; they can often help in carrying out UN programs.

Who are the NGOs?

There is a tremendous diversity among the non-governmental organizations. It is impossible to describe a generic NGO. Each NGO is made up of

people who come together in different places at different times for different purposes.

Among the NGOs which have consultative status with the UN, there are organizations of farmers, scientists, doctors, women, youth, lawyers, meteorologists, retired people; Muslims, Buddhists, Jews and Christians of different stripes; environmentalists, trade unionists, peace activists, veterans, indigenous peoples, journalists, human rights activists, social workers, drilling contractors, civil servants, teachers, alcoholics, midwives, airline pilots, even beekeepers. Given the wonderful diversity and variety of humanity and human interest, there's an organization for everyone!

Most NGOs are local, fewer are national, only a very few are international.

Generally speaking, only the international NGOs relate to the United Nations. There are several channels for doing so:

1. ECOSOC. Article 71 of the UN Charter provides for NGOs to have consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. Today, nearly 1,000 NGOs have so qualified. The ECOSOC Committee on NGOs reviews applications and recommends to the full ECOSOC which NGOs should be granted consultative status. The Committee on NGOs also periodically reviews quadriennial reports submitted by the recognized NGOs. During the Cold War, the application and review of NGOs was a minor field for playing out East-West conflicts. This is less so now, although the Committee can still be used by governments to express their displeasure with certain NGOs, notably those active in the field of human rights reporting. There are three categories of ECOSOC NGO, as defined in ECOSOC Resolution 1296 (adopted 23 May 1968):

1.1 Category I: organizations concerned with most of the activities of ECOSOC, which make marked and sustained contributions to the objectives of the UN, with considerable and broadly representative membership in a large number of countries.

1.2 Category II: organizations which have special competence in and are concerned with only a few of the fields of activity covered by ECOSOC, and which are known internationally within their field.

1.3 Roster: other organizations which can make occasional and useful contributions to the work of ECOSOC or other UN bodies, including specialized agencies.

2. DPI. The Department of Public Information has a separate procedure for approving NGOs for association with DPI. In this procedure, applications are reviewed and acted upon by a Secretariat committee, not by member states. The principal purpose of this type of association is the redissemination of information in order to increase public understanding of the United Nations. Most of the NGO representatives appearing around UN Headquarters are associated with DPI, rather than international NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC.

3. Other UN bodies keep their own lists of NGOs with whom they share information or work within their areas of responsibility. Examples include UNICEF, the World Health Organization, the Centre against Apartheid, the Centre for Disarmament, and others. There is generally no formal procedure for getting on these lists.

The international NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC have formed their own voluntary association known as the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Status (CONGO) which serves as a kind of trade association for the NGOs. It monitors the UN's rules and procedures for dealing with NGOs and speaks out for NGO interests. CONGO's charter prohibits it from making statements on substantive issues; it is for each individual NGO to take its own positions. Under CONGO's auspices, the NGOs have formed a number of committees around the issues of common interest, such as disarmament, development, human rights and women's issues. These committees provide forums for the exchange of information and the organization of conferences.

Possibilities for NGOs

Broadly speaking, one can say that NGOs participate in the UN system in four ways. Some NGOs concentrate in one or another way; others in all.

1. Raising up issues. By raising up issues and bringing certain circumstances to light, NGOs shape how we think about the world. Within the UN system, NGOs have been instrumental in bringing to the world's agenda issues such as the role of women, the environment, and human rights.

2. Shaping UN decisions. Through their information, expertise, and advocacy, NGOs can help shape the decisions taken by UN bodies. There is a spectrum of influence here, with less NGO input in the political field and greater input in the social and humanitarian fields. Close to one pole would be the Security Council, where NGO influence is rather small; at the other pole would be the International Labour Organization, where employer and trade union delegates have equal vote with government representatives.

3. Implementing UN decisions. NGOs can be important partners in implementing UN decisions and programs. Notable examples are in the fields of development, refugees, and public information.

4. Watchdog function. Alongside the press, NGOs help observe, report upon, and critique the role of the United Nations.

Examples of NGO Work and Analysis of Impact

The following examples of NGO work and impact are drawn from my own experience as the representative of the Lutheran World Federation, the international body with more than 100 Lutheran member churches around the world. Many many more examples could be given about the work of other NGOs.

Namibia. NGOs were instrumental in first raising the issue of Namibia before the United Nations, and in keeping the issue alive. In the UN Headquarters in the visitors' lobby near the Security Unit is the bust of Chief Kutako, a Namibian of the Herero people. At the end of World War II, when South Africa sought UN approval to annex Namibia, Chief Kutako wanted the world to known that the Namibian people did not want to continue to be ruled by foreigners, that they wanted to govern themselves and be treated with dignity and respect. He delegated the Rev. Michael Scott, an Anglican priest, to present the case of the Namibians to the United Nations. Scott did so with vigor, to good effect.

Over the years of Namibia's struggle for independence, NGOs such as Lutheran World Federation, World Council of Churches, Amnesty International, International Defence and Aid Fund, and International Commission of Jurists kept the Namibiam issue on the world agenda by providing a constant stream of reliable information. The church bodies, particularly Lutheran World Federation outside and the Council of Churches inside Namibia, were the main channel for relief assistance to Namibians during the long years when sanctions were in place and it was both inappropriate and impossible to work through the oppressive South Africa governmental channels.

During the year-long transition to Namibian independence in 1989-1990, the UN Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG) relied heavily on NGO support. This was most apparent in the refugee repatriation operation, where UNHCR used the Council of Churches in Namibia as their operational partner to receive returnees, get them back to their homes, and provide them with transitional assistance. The churches are trusted by local poeple and have a network reaching into every small corner of the country, something the UN could have never duplicated. The churches also helped UNTAG by providing office and personal accommodations, interpreters, and local information. Most important, perhaps, was the role played by the church in giving UNTAG credibility among the local people, resulting in UNTAG quickly gaining reliable channels of information and communication which the South African occupiers could only dreamed about. The UN Special Representative in Namibia has stated to me that the church's role was vital to the success of UNTAG.

Guatemala. In 1990 in Oslo, representatives of the Guatemalan government and guerillas met for the first time in their more than 30 years of fighting. This was at the invitation of the Lutheran World Federation. That an NGO could bring together the warring parties was possible because the LWF had over the years quietly developed the knowledge and trust of the parties, and because the LWF had absolutely no self-interest. The Guatemalan peace process continues with a deliberate process of meetings between the guerillas and various sectors of Guatemalan society. Having gotten the ball rolling, LWF has handed over its observer and facilitation role to the United Nations.

Refugees. Much of UNHCR's work is done through NGOs. In a number of countries, mainly in Africa, Lutheran World Federation, UNHCR and the host country have tripartite agreements for the care of refugees. The host country provides land, security and legal status; the UNHCR provides international protection and financial support and LWF provides technical, managerial and financial support. LWF has also worked closely with UNHCR in a number of refugee repatriations in places as diverse as Mozambique, Zimbabwe, El Salvador and now Cambodia. LWF's affiliates help with refugee resettlement in the USA, Canada and Australia. On a more political side, an NGO delegation (of which I was a member) travelled to Vietnam in 1991 at the invitation of UNHCR to assess the situation of Vietnamese who had voluntarily returned home, thus facilitating an important component of the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Refugees in Southeast Asia.

Development and Disaster Relief. This has been a major area of cooperation between the UN system and NGOs. Almost every operation of UNDP, UNICEF, UNDRO and other agencies in this area has an NGO component. By way of example, I need only mention the provision of drought relief in Ethiopia in the mid-1980s, Operation Lifeline Sudan, and the current efforts to provide relief for the worst drought of the century in southern and eastern Africa.

Human Rights. The vital contributions of NGOs to the human rights work of the UN is recognized each year by the Secretary-General and by the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights. The UN relies upon NGOs for research and information on situations of human rights concern, for raising controversial issues which would otherwise not come to the table, and for contributions to human rights standard-setting and monitoring. As the Secretary-General stated in his 1990 annual report, "In striving to meet the human rights aspirations of all regions, the United Nations relies upon the commitment of non-governmental organizations and the courage and sacrifice of individuals throughout the world."

How You Can Work with NGOs

In order to work effectively with NGOs, I would offer the following set of advice for members of permanent missions and staff members from the UN Secretariat:

- identify your priority issues, and seek out good NGOs in those fields. The right NGO can often be an excellent source of information and ideas. Do not be afraid to look beyond the NGO's New York or Geneva representatives, who are usually generalists, to expert contacts elsewhere within the NGO's structure;

- remember to think of the possibility of NGOs as implementing agencies for UN programs or efforts. Compared with governmental or intergovernmental channels, NGOs are often flexible, fast, economical and effective;

- use the special services which NGOs can offer. For example, here in New York close to the UN is Quaker House, an excellent venue for off-the-record discussions of thorny matters, a place where people in the UN community can quietly come together around common issues. NGOs can help with research and study of issues within their competence. In some cases, the right NGO can offer mediation services. As in the Guatemala example above, an NGO can even bring together warring parties.

Conclusion

My hope for this presentation is that it has cast some light upon the identity and role of the NGOs in the UN system. The possibilities for NGOs and for working with NGOs are endless - limited only by your imagination.

Working with NGOs: Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System with Non-Governmental Organizations and Governments at the Grassroot and National Levels

Executive summary, conclusions and recommendations of a forthcoming JIU Report prepared by Francesco Mezzalama and Siegfried Schumm

During the past few years, governing bodies in the United Nations system have urged the system's development activities to give high priority to human resources, popular participation, institution-building and the alleviation of poverty. To implement these policies, secretariats have begun actions to strengthen country programming, delegate authority and decentralize activities to the field level. As these efforts progress, the organizations are discovering that thousands of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) around the world are already very deeply engaged in the new priority activities at the field level.

The United Nations system and governments have generally not done much work with NGOs in the past, although experience varies from close ties to almost no contact. International organizations, Governments and NGOs have differing development traditions, perspectives, processes and experience, which can and do create frictions, misunderstandings and operational difficulties. The NGO sector is also so dynamic, diverse and rapidly changing that it defies easy analysis or 'one best way' approaches. Nevertheless, the powerful recent international economic and political trends which underlie the new development policies indicate that more active and effective collaboration between these groups can be a quite significant factor in advancing international economic and social development.

The forthcoming JIU Report focuses on opportunities and problems involved in greater collaboration between international organizations, NGOs and Governments in operational activities for development at the field level. After a brief discussion of the nature of NGO work and recent trends, the Report looks at collaborative actions and interrelationships among the three groups at the country level. The Report then outlines support for these field activities from regional, global, policy-making and inter-agency levels. It then explores aspects of five important operational processes that can strengthen collaboration and heighten joint effectiveness.

The material in the Report reflects extensive research, discussion and possible lines of action for operational improvement, but it only scrtaches the surface of this complex and still new area of 'development cooperation' (in its fullest and best sense). The following conclusions and recommendations are presented as an initial contribution on this complex subject. It is expected that the Report will become part of

a vigorous and sustained process of discussion, exchange of experience, and collaborative action between international organizations, governments and NGOs to help attain the urgent new development objectives which have been established.

Actions at the country level: The country level is the central focus for operational partnership with NGOs. It is there, and at the sectoral, district, and particularly local and grassroots levels within the country that field representatives of the United Nations system need to build face-to-face working relationships with NGOs and governments to further the central objectives of human development, capacity-building and popular participation. Several basic steps seem needed to make this interaction as well-focused, efficient and effective as possible.

Recommendation 1: Executive heads of each organization with operational activities for development and NGOs and Governments should consider the following basic steps (within the context of the situation, policies and programmes prevailing in each country) to build on and share experience and enhance multilateral agency/NGO/Governmentoperationalcollaboration at the country and grassroots levels.

(a) Participative programming process: integrative programming which seeks to actively involve relevant NGOs in the formulation, implementation and assessment of development programmes in an ongoing and flexible process.

(b) Delegation/decentralization: mechanisms to allow field representatives to work with NGOs and respond more flexibly and strongly to specific local needs, initiatives and opportunities in a country.

(c) Guidelines: distillation of experience, policies, ideas, procedures and requirements which allows field representatives to better understand how NGOs work and to facilitate collaboration with them.

(d) Host governments with NGOs: advice on approaches which field representatives can use to encourage and facilitate joint Government/NGO efforts.

(e) Southern with Northern NGOs: advice on the differences, similarities and changing relationships of these two groups, as the basis for encouraging their collaboration.

Actions at other levels: The country level is central, but other levels can play a very important role in supporting field-level work with NGOs, through operational and technical backstopping, information exchanges, guidelines and operational research and assessments.

Recommendation 2: Executive heads of each organization with operational activities for development and NGOs and Governments should consider actions at the following levels to build on and share experience and enhance multilateral agency/NGO/Government operational collaboration.

(a) Regional: establishing a focal point for operational collaboration at the regional level, which would also support collaboration in those countries where field representatives for NGO work is lacking or very thin.

(b) Global: establishing a central unit or focal point which provides overall policy, guidance and publications for operational activities with NGOs, emphasis on a mutual learning and dialogue process, and close contact with the organizations' operational units that work with NGOs.

(c) Policy-making: seeking ways to benefit from NGO grassroot experience and perspectives by establishing regular, substantive consultations with them on operational issues and programmes and involving them more actively in special global conferences on development issues.

(d) Inter-agency: support for, interactions with, and strengthening of the information and other activities of the United Nations Non-Governmental Liason Service, a small inter-agency unit which has very well established working relationships with Northern, Southern and international development NGOs.

Key operational processes: Collaborative processes with and among operational NGOs are still quite new and under-developed. They differ considerably from collaborative relations with Governments, because of both positive NGO characteristics (very flexible, innovative, highly participative, grassroots focus) and negative ones (vast numbers, isolation from other groups, and often very modest managerial and programme capabilities and aims). In the light of these characteristics, four further areas should receive priority attention.

Recommendation 3: Executive heads of each organization with operational activities for developments and NGOs and Governments should consider actions in the following areas to build on and share experience, strengthen NGO capabilities and support operational collaboration between multilateral agencies, NGOs and Governments.

(a) Networking: identify relevant NGO networks and umbrella organizations, and encourage and support their ability to strengthen NGO knowledge and capacities.

(b) Databases and information exchange: establish and maintain databases or directories of NGO partners, the sharing of database information where possible, and a two-way 'information culture' to keep collaborating NGOs aware of the organizationss' plans and programmes while also gathering useful information and ideas from the huge range of NGO information sources worldwide.

(c) Capacity-building and training programmes: support capacity-building and training opportunities at the field level and the capacity-building, research and training programmes already well underway in the NGO sector worldwide.

(d) Evaluation: seek ways to harmonize and simplify evaluation procedures while maintaining proper reporting and accountability, encourage participative evaluation approaches and strengthen NGO understanding of and capacities for evaluation.

Administrative Committee on Coordination: The agencies have not yet taken a very fresh or creative look at the whole area of financial collaboration with local development NGOs, including the many initiatives already taken by bilateral assistance agencies and NGOs themselves. Knowledgeable officials believe that joint efforts to develop effective guidance for future work with NGOs are very much needed.

Recommendation 4: The ACC should take the lead in developing appropriate, harmonized and simplified guidance for funding, financial management and auditing processes with local development NGOs, to help build NGO institutional capacities and strengthen collaborative development work.

United Nations Development Programme: UNDP can take a particular leadership role in several critical areas mentioned above, because of its worldwide network of field offices, its important role in the Resident Coordinator system, its new emphasis on strengthening national capacities and grassroots participation in development, and its broad programme initiatives in support of NGOs over the past decade.

Recommendation 5: The Administrator of UNDP should:

(a) establish a focal point person in every possible field office, to gather and disseminate information on development NGOs in-country, encourage new initiatives with NGOs and apply UNDP programmes in support of NGO capacity-building.

(b) update and re-issue the 1987 and 1988 UNDP general guidance on collaboration with NGOs, in light of the many new developments and policies which have emerged.

United Nations: The United Nations Secretariat has very wide-ranging and extensive areas of operational collaboration with NGOs, including several important new areas, but it has not yet inventoried, analyzed or organized these activities. Furthermore, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Brazil in 1992 showed that NGOs can play a very substantive role in global conferences on development issues. Yet existing procedures for their participation are quite limited and ad hoc. 'Popular participation in development' policies and inclusion of the dynamism, creativity and experience of local development NGOs should apply at the global level as well as at the local and country levels.

Recommendation 6: The Secretary-General should update and issue an extensive but uncompleted 1988 management review of NGO involvement in Secretariat operational programmes, and then formulate an overall policy and framework for the many programmes working with NGOs.

Recommendation 7: The General Assembly might wish to request the Secretary-General, in consultation with other organizations of the system, to analyze and update existing procedures for special conferences in order to encourage greater participation of NGOs and other groups in special global conferences on development issues, and thereby help ensure popular participation in global policy formulation on these issues.

Growing role of NGOs underscored by the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development

In an introductory statement made at the beginning of the two-week biennial session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations in March this year, Mr. Nitin Desai, Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, stated, among other things, that 'today, the work of non-governmental organizations covered the whole range of international concerns', that 'they brought knowledge and expertise to the Organization and they often played the role of an early warning system, which through their specialized knowledge and contacts, could contribute to the formulation of plans and programmes for the United Nations'. He also said that the full potential of collaboration between the Organization and Non-governmental organizations should
be explored. In the process leading to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), an unprecendented number of non-governmental organizations had contributed to shaping and publicizing the events of the Conference.

In the coming years, he said, many new opportunities would be provided for non-governmental organizations to participate in the work of the United Nations, particularly for the forthcoming world/international conferences.
By contributing their expertise to the Organization at a time of resource constraint, he continued, non-governmental organizations could provide vital support for United Nations programmes. They could increase support for the United Nations at a critical juncture in its history.

He stated that ECOSOC's decision to review the current arrangements for determining the consultative status of NGOs should be viewed against the broad backdrop of the evolution of international decision-making over the last decade. There was a new demand for transparency, cooperation and the participation of multiple actors in that process.

(For more details, see Press Release NGO/213, 22 March 1993)

EVALUATION METHODOLOGIES

Analysis of press coverage of United Nations activities/operations - methodological considerations

by Maurice Clapisson

I/ General considerations

1. How the analysis of press coverage can contribute to programme evaluation? The material found in the press appears promising for several reasons: it can offer a wide range of possible views on a programme, and these views are formulated outside of the Organization; in general it is widely circulated, and it presents itself in a form ready for processing. However, assuming the difficulties of data collection have been resolved, data validity in relation to the issues under study remains to be assessed .

2. It is extremely doubtful that our set of data can be universal. Therefore decisions have to be made on the choice of sources. We have to make sure that (a) the information gathered is useful for our purpose, without (b) overrepresenting the views of any one group.

3. The analysis of press coverage can use a variety of approaches. It can be a mere count of citations of the programme in the press; it can be a systematic and thorough content analysis of articles. If we choose to rest our analysis on a simple count of programme citations, caution should be exercised when giving credit for press coverage to certain components or strategies of the programme, even if the link seems obvious. An impressive press coverage may point to any of the following:

- programme achievements have been recognized and have drawn public attention;
- programme failures have been recognized and have drawn public attention;
- efforts to advertize programme activities have achieved their goals;
- no other entity in the same domain competes for press coverage;
- issues dealt with by the programme are, in their own right, of interest to the public.

If we choose to rely on content analysis, the typology of press material comes into play strongly. What sort of text is under scrutiny: editorial? news? If the text has editorial functions, is it published in a context where criticism is expected regardless of acknowledged achievements?

II/ CEU practice

4. At the CEU, we have in recent years, reviewed a number of computerized data files representative of the press coverage provided under different political and economic systems. We have found that NEXIS -- available through the Dag Hammarskjold Library -- is the most suitable of those data-bases accessible to us. Of the different files in NEXIS, we have focused mostly on the analysis of stories in NEXIS WIRES file.

THE NEXIS SERVICE

Users may search a wide variety of full-text files and most file combinations in the NEXIS library. Each of the individual files may be searched separately; all files may be searched at one time in the OMNI file. The full-text files also are combined into groups by publication type (PAPERS, MAGS, WIRES and NELTRS) and also by subject (BUS, FIN, GOVT, INTL, NEWS, PERSON and TRADE&TEC).

Wire stories are a major source of international information for the press. As such, they can be a useful index of either press interest, or of potential for publicity. The NEXIS WIRES file contains 25 wire services, including AFP, AP, ASAHI, Inter-Press Service, JIJI, KYODO, Reuters, TASS, UPI and Xinhua, which are the main sources of coverage of the United Nations utilized by the press in all parts of the world. In 1992, 1.40 million stories had been filed in NEXIS WIRES, of which 78,000 mentioned the United Nations.

5. In the context of our in-depth evaluations of United Nations programmes, we have used wire stories (a) to find out the significance that a low or high frequency of citations may have, for a United Nations programme, and (b) to analyze the contents of the full texts of these stories.

(a) Count of citations

Typically a search on one topic at a time is conducted in the data base. Several clusters are requested, which can be:

(1) total number of stories on the topic (not restricted to citation of the United Nations);

(2) number of stories on the topic with at least one reference to the United Nations;

(3) number of stories on the topic with at least one reference to the programme evaluated.

To stand a good chance to identify important factors, key-words used for the searches should permit data to be surveyed at a variety of levels.

In a recent evaluation of UNHCR, we analyzed results of searches conducted with the following key-words:

(i) refugees; UN; UNHCR;
(ii) the High Commissioner; the spokesperson of; Sadako Ogata;
(iii) ICRC; UNICEF; UNRWA (comparators);
(iv) Yugoslavia; refugees/displaced; UN; UNHCR;
(v) (wire stories filed in) Geneva; New York.

External factors -- among them, the constant development of NEXIS WIRES -- argue against using absolute numbers resulting from searches (e.g. 200 stories on XY); rather proportions between clusters of stories, in the form of percentages should be used (e.g. 20% of all stories on the topic referred to XY). For instance, the proportion of stories on the programme in the data base, and the evolution of this ratio over the years, can be presented as findings to be discussed with the programme staff and with end-users (press correspondents, government officials, etc.). These discussions can help determine whether an analysis of the content of a random sample of stories is justified, and if so the issues to look for (see considerations in paragraph 3 above). NEXIS searches covering several years of programme activities and millions of wire service or other press stories can be completed in a few hours.

(b) Content analysis

Analysis of the full text of stories filed in NEXIS WIRES cannot replace an analysis of articles published in the press; in particular, we cannot know how stories will be used by journalists to shape public opinion. However, in spite of these limitations, the analysis of full texts of wire stories has been useful. It can complement the results of an approach based on count of citations. The following issues have been assessed through such analysis:

- whether wire stories are reporting UN activities without mentioning the UN explicitly;

- whether stories dwell mostly on details, or mention substantive issues;

- whether stories consistently report new developments in certain activities or ignore them.

- whether stories report programme shortcomings, or ignore them;

- how well a major event (an international conference) has been covered or not covered, and how the visibility of officials has contributed or not contributed to a better recognition of programme achievements.

In a new context where the United Nations is called upon to function less and less as a closed system, the analysis of press coverage of United Nations activities may become more and more attractive.

Programme managers in many parts of the United Nations must come to understand how the world press functions and how it reports their work, in order to utilize its extraordinary capacities, and avoid as far as possible problems arising from its limitations.

For a broader utilization of the press, methodologies have to be developed beyond the present limited practice.

DPI's Analysis of Press Coverage *

by Raquel Cohen-Orantes
Programme Evaluation and Communications Research Unit (PECRU)

Introduction

Since January 1993, the DPI's Programme Evaluation and Communications Research Unit (PECRU) has been conducting a systematic analysis of press coverage of United Nations activities and related issues, based on the daily news clippings provided by the Spokesman's Office. The results of the analysis are summarized and commented upon in a one-page weekly report which, so far, has focused only on the UN operations in Somalia.

The purpose of the project is two-fold: (a) to provide managers -- who often have no time to read more than one newspaper or go through 20-30 daily clippings -- with a quick overview of what the press is saying about specific UN operations; and (b) to asses long-term trends in press coverage of the Organization vis-à-vis changes in the UN public information policies and practices.

Classifying the news articles

Except for the New York Times, which is directly clipped by PECRU every day, the project relies entirely on the daily provision of press clippings prepared by the Spokesman's Office. These articles are classified according to broad themes of interest to the Organization, such as "Cambodia", "Former Yugoslavia", "Middle East", "Somalia", etc. Although news stories sometimes touch upon more than one theme, PECRU's single-topic criterion for classification is determined by the headline and the lead paragraph of the article. Each of the articles grouped under one topic becomes the unit of analysis from which results are derived on an aggregate basis (see table containing 10-week-summary results on Somalia).

In-depth analysis of specific topics covered

Once a topic has been chosen for in-depth analysis, as is the case with PECRU's focus on Somalia, all stories dealing with it in any given week are further categorized or broken down by sub-themes (military/peacekeeping, reconciliation, relief/humanitarian) and other elements of a news article that may have a bearing on the image of the United Nations (e.g., the UN is mentioned in the headline or lead, the Secretary-General and other UN officials are quoted, etc.).

Coding the UN's image

The in-depth analysis of each article's content seeks to ascertain whether:

(a) the Organization is mentioned in a factual, "neutral" manner;

(b) there are references to, or descriptions of, the UN and its activities that contain positive or negative elements, or a mixture of both;

(c) the Organization or any of its officials are mentioned as in conflict with other organizations (within and without the UN-system), groups or member states.

These are the most essential elements accounting for the "critical" and "conflict-driven" images of the United Nations summarized in the table. The exclusive characteristics needed to codify each element became evident during the pilot test conducted by PECRU in December 1992-January 1993, which involved various sets of news articles covering different topics.

* The project design was developed by Raquel Cohen-Orantes and Ilya Adler, researchers with the DPI's Programme Evaluation and Communications Research Unit (PECRU).

THE UN IN SOMALIA: ANALYSIS OF PRESS COVERAGE (23 JANUARY - 2 APRIL 1993)

PRESS COVERAGE IN BRIEF

Total articles clipped 2389

- Former Yugoslavia 727
- Middle East 247
- Somalia 160
- Cambodia 120
- Russia 117
- Iraq 78
- UN restructuring/SC reform 74
- Angola 72
- Other 794

Basic Data Analyzed (see sources below)

- No. and type of articles on Somalia: 160
  - News stories 124
  - Op-ed/commentary 12
  - News analysis 11
  - Editorial 7
  - Letters to editor 4
  - Interview 2
- Average No. of paragraphs per article 14
- Percentage UN mentioned in headlines 35.0%
- Percentage UN mentioned in lead para. 47.0%
- Percentage UN mentioned elsewhere 81.0%
- Top UN-SG/agencies/bodies mentioned:
  - UN officials 34.0%
  - Secretary-General 31.0%
  - Security Council 27.0%
  - UNICEF 6.0%
  - World Food Programme 6.0%
  - UNDP 1.3%
  - WHO/FAO/ECA (each) 0.6%
- Major topics/themes covered:
  - UN takeover 36.0%
  - Military/peacekeeping 31.0%
  - Reconstruction/local politics 13.0%
  - Reconciliation 5.0%
  - Relief/humanitarian 4.0%
  - Peace negotiations 4.0%

Critical image of the UN

- Mostly positive 2.5%
  - *Implicit elements:
    - Taking correct position 1.3%
    - Active 1.3%
    - Efficient 0.6%
    - Grassroots activist 0.6%
- Mostly negative 24.0%
  - *Implicit elements:
    - Inefficient/slow 9.4%
    - Discredited/distrusted 7.5%
    - Powerless/ill equipped 7.5%
    - Inept 5.6%
    - Bureaucratic 2.5%
- Mixed 12.5%
- Neither positive nor negative 61.0%
  - *Implicit elements:
    - Lacking support 1.3%
    - Lacking resources 0.6%
    - Unprecedented undertaking ... 0.6%

Conflict-driven image of the UN

- Articles showing conflict: 10.6%
  - UN w/ member states 4.37%
  - UN w/ NGOs 2.50%
  - UN w/ warring parties 1.25%
  - UN w/ US envoy/Somali leaders 1.25%
  - Between member states 0.62%
  - Member states w/ NGOs 0.62%

*N.B. Each article may contain up to two implicit elements. Some articles are classified as neither positive nor negative without containing implicit elements.

(DPI/PECRU: May 1993)

Sources: New York Times, Washington Post, Christian Science Monitor, Guardian (UK), Times (UK), Le Monde, Financial Times, Washington Times, Daily Telegraph, Le Quotidien de Paris, International Herald Tribune, La Repubblica (Italy), El Pais (Spain), Irish Times, Bangkok Post, Yomiuri Shimbun, Egyptian Gazette, Le Soleil (Senegal), Turkish Daily News, etc.

Some thoughts on new directions for Evaluation in the United Nations

by Leonor Sampaio */

Evaluation like the other work of departments and units - be they agencies or other United Nations bodies - reflects a distinctive methodology that is a complex amalgam of the background goals, objectives, customs, the personalities involved and particularities of the programmes evaluated. Although it is honed over time and reshaped periodically by external evaluations, it reflects the inner workings of particular sections.

While the relevance of evaluation for a good delivery of programmes may be minimized by some, the bulk of evidence supports the need for evaluation because of the countless ways it reveals its worth: in helping the programme managers to meet objectives, in improving management decisions, in adjusting programmes, in applying ethics to the system and in improving work relations.

In the past, evaluation at the United Nations developed in isolation while the United Nations itself was functioning as a closed system. Now, the situation has changed; the Organization functions much more as an open system and not only has it grown substantially but also it is being called upon to provide leadership on political, legal, economic and social concerns. However, not all of the many subjects studied garner the support that coalesces around issues such as peace-keeping or refugees.

The products of evaluation studies are not destined for 'in-house' use but are directed to ameliorate the programmes that affect life and living standards on a world-wide scale. How to coordinate all UN action and make it both more effective and more cost-effective remains a challenge. Increasingly the coordinating bodies are confronting the issue and engaged in solving conflicts ranging from budgetary issues to human rights questions. A systematic synthesis of programme evaluation efforts at the UN would identify areas to be linked in order to avoid duplication, increase cooperation and ensure a net gain in programme effectiveness. At the present time, however, very little funding is allocated to evaluation while potentially less yielding activities are in several instances well funded.

A new approach could be based on the following evaluation model with a four-pronged approach to be used system-wide:

1) Levels of evaluation activity: 1/
a) management delivery
b) assisting the formulation of programmes
c) identifying needs
d) linking programme priorities with feasible intervention methods

2) Functional roles of the evaluator: 2/
- clerical-statistical monitoring of self-evaluation
- client utilization monitoring
- comparison and contrast of users
- management decision making

3) Outcome of intervention: 3/
- utilization of programme outcome indicators
- focusing on process, users and programme subsystems
- impact of the effects of action in the delivery of programmes

4) System-wide integrated data banks: 4/
- stipulation of elements of information
- economics data
- translation of abstract data summaries into decision-making material
- providing specialized studies for overall planning

The adoption of a new approach based on this model would allow the establishment of a continuum in the delivery of UN services, assessment of a programme's current status and comparison with similar programmes. Hopefully it would also provide the international community with the assurance that limited resources are being used on a rational basis and its needs effectively served.

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*/The views expressed are the author's and are not necessarily those of the United Nations.

The complementarity between in-depth and self evaluations. Ways and means of improving self-evaluation.

by Frank Owarish

In-depth evaluations are those undertaken by the Central Evaluation Unit of the United Nations based upon a schedule adopted by CPC. Those undertaking such evaluations could rightly be considered as third party analysts who are independent in their views and approaches since they are 'outsiders' to the programmes evaluated. This type of evaluation has several advantages such as neutrality and impartiality and given the use of appropriate methodologies and techniques tend to be more objective than subjective.

While all the substantive programmes would undergo in-depth evaluation at one time another, there are limitations as to how many in-depth evaluations could be undertaken in any given period of time.

Such evaluations involve the preparation by the Central Evaluation Unit of a progress report and its submission to CPC; it usually includes the study design which covers the nature and scope of the study as well as the prominent issues and preliminary findings. Usually the time taken by this process is one year. Then a two-year period is usually required to undertake the in-depth study and prepare and submit the final report to CPC for its consideration. There is then a triennial review and such follow-ups as CPC may decide. In-depth evaluations culminate with recommendations, generally on programmatic changes.

In-depth evaluations are complemented by the so-called self-evaluation which programme managers undertake periodically.

Self-evaluations cover a broader span of programmes in any given period.

Again, such studies are undertaken according to a schedule approved by CPC and the General Assembly. Self-evaluation has the advantage of its broad coverage. However, a major limitation is the fact that a programme manager is being called upon to evaluate his/her own programmes or subprogrammes and there is a strong possibility that they may tend to be more subjective than objective. They do have the advantage of their first-hand knowledge of the issues and problems involved and they also have the advantage of being involved in the search for solutions and thus of internalizing them. General Assembly resolution 47/214 has requested the Secretary-General inter alia to improve the methodology of self-evaluation. A fundamental way of minimizing subjectivity factors is to improve the methodology and techniques utilized in designing and carrying out self-evaluation studies, to ensure that they are properly documented and that the conclusions are reported systematically to the policymaking bodies involved.

Another way of strengthening self-evaluation is through the support that the Central Evaluation Unit provides to the programme managers, which includes training in evaluation methodology and techniques complemented by technical advisory services as may be required. Several offices have evaluation units; these provide the day-to-day backstopping that the programme managers require.

It should be clear to programme managers that self-evaluation is not a luxury to undertake as and when time is available but is an integral part of programme management,

which itself consists of planning, implementation and the part which is often neglected, that of seeking and obtaining feedback as to how the objectives of the plan are being achieved.

The United Nations Internal Evaluation System has two basic components: */

1. Self-evaluation: undertaken by programme managers primarily for their own use. Self-evaluation focuses on the subprogramme and can be applied to all sectors including political, legal, humanitarian, economic and social affairs, public informatoon and common services. As an integral part of the management process, its design and conduct are formulated at the planning and programming stages in conjunction with that of the relevant subprogramme. Findings are applied by the programme managers to make necessary adjustments to implementation or are fed back into the planning and programming process in the form of proposed

changes in design and/or orientation of the subprogramme or project concerned. The results of evaluations within UNCTAD, ECA, UNEP, UNHCR and several other organizational units are reported at the intergovernmental level. The conclusions drawn from the analytical information generated for various subprogrammes and projects within a programme can also be used as inputs for assessing the programme as a whole. In other words, the findings of self-evaluation may serve as building-blocks for in-depth evaluations.

2. In-depth evaluation: undertaken by the Central Evaluation Unit at the request of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), as endorsed by the General Assembly, or by evaluation units in regional and sectoral secretariats at the request of their governing bodies. This type of evaluation may also be initiated by the Secretary-General for a particular programme as the need arises. In-depth evaluation focuses on the programme. On the basis of studies conducted by the relevant evaluation unit for their consideration, CPC, intergovernmental bodies at the regional and sectoral levels, other technical intergovernmental bodies, and appropriate expert bodies concerned, review entire programmes in depth. The objective is to make recommendations that would help the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly to formulate decisions for increasing the overall relevance, effectiveness and impact of the programmes of the United Nations in the context of the intergovernmental goals and policies.

(Source: Evaluation Manual of the United Nations, Central Evaluation Unit, United Nations, New York, 1986, pages 8 & 9)

Evaluation of operational activities*/

Operational activities are understood to be activities undertaken by entities of the United Nations system geared to assisting countries improve their developmental capacity, including institutions and human resources. Several United Nations entities are involved in providing such activities which are generally defined in the form of programmes and projects. This article looks at the experience of ILO in evaluating operational activities.

The basic premise of ILO is that, as a starting point, the projects themselves need to be properly designed since the 'quality of the design may have a profound effect on the implementation process and on evaluation'. ILO has clear requirements for project design covering such project components as: background and context, the target group (intended beneficiaries), objectives to be achieved, indicators (i.e elements which will demonstrate that the project's immediate objective has been achieved and those which provide evidence of progress toward the achievement of the development objective), outputs, activities, inputs, institutional framework, prior obligations and requisites and assumptions. There is thus a good baseline and evaluation critically examines actual or potential results in order to improve the effectiveness of continuing projects and to provide guidance for the planning of new ones. Evaluation represents an attempt to learn from the collective experience of persons knowledgeable about or involved in the project. Evaluation can take many forms, depending on the specific purpose and objective of the evaluation and whether it is carried out by outside consultants, donor representatives, in-house personnel, the project staff or a combination of these.

The nature and focus of the evaluation will normally be established through the terms of reference. Although evaluations carried out by any of the above-mentined groups are likely to address the same basic questions supplemented by others as might be determined by the evaluation objectives, the following steps are followed for evaluations carried out for purposes of project management. The selection of the evaluation team in this context is seen as management's prerogative, although in practice the value of the exercise is enhanced by involving a number of persons connected with the project and representing varied viewpoints. Broad representation is seen as usually contributing to a more comprehensive review of project status, promoting a better understanding of the project and facilitating the implementation of recommendations.

The evaluation process is usually divided into three phases: preparation, conduct and reporting.

It is usually the responsibility of the project manager to arrange for the collection of certain data relating both to the achievement of the stated objectives and project performance. About a month before the evaluation, (s)he is generally expected to prepare an evaluation worksheet for use by the evaluation team. The worksheet basically provides for the collection of information around the project design, namely development objective, immediate objective, outputs, activities and inputs. The evaluation team is provided with the information collected by the worksheet, which is critically reviewed to assess whether the worksheet correctly reflects the design as a whole and the previously established objectives, indicators and assumptions and whether performance has been adequately reflected. The evaluation team then proceeds to comparing the results with the plan through the application of seven distinct but interrelated analytical tests:

(i) effectiveness, i.e the extent to which the project has achieved or is likely to achieve its objectives. The analysis could include the following aspects: has the project made the anticipated progress towards the realization of the scheduled outputs? Judging on the basis of the data collected for each indicator, is it likely that the immediate objective will be achieved? Similarly, does the available evidence suggest that a meaningful contribution towards the attainment of the development objective will be made and that there will be the desired impact on the target group? Some changes in outputs from those originally planned could happen and similarly the accomplishment of indicator targets may vary from projections. The variances are analyzed. The question asked is whether the objectives

*/ prepared by the Editor based on material provided by ILO.

have been achieved or if there is a reasonable expectation that the projections will be met, and if not, whether the objectives are still attainable;

(ii) efficiency, i.e do the expected project results continue to justify the cost. The analysis permits a measurement of efficiency by ascertaining whether the balance between inputs and outputs on the one hand and immediate objective achievement on the other hand remains essentially as originally planned. In the event that extensive changes of inputs, outputs or the immediate objective are needed, or in case the project schedule is changed significantly and as a result costs increase, the interrelationships of these variables needs to be looked into;

(iii) relevance, i.e determination of the significance of the project (does the project continue to make sense?) There is a basic question whether, under the circumstances prevailing, the original objective is still as relevant as when initially proposed. The relevance test is of the utmost importance in view of changes which frequently occur between planning and implementation. Political, economic and other factors or the effect the project has had during its initial implementation period will often change the setting and rationale to an extent that the expansion, extention or cancellation of the project becomes warranted. The test in this instance is a determination of whether the project's immediate and developmet objectives are still worth pursuing;

(iv) continuing validity of the project design, in other words is the design itself still logical and coherent? Is there a reasonable expectation that the planned inputs, activities and outputs, together with the appropriate assumptions, will lead to the achievement of the objectives? If the answer is negative, the project will almost certainly fail to have the desired effect, even though some good may result from the outputs produced; in any event, the project's difficulties would need careful re-examination. If, on the other hand, it is found that the inputs were delivered more or less as originally planned, resulting in the planned activities and producing the expected outputs, one may conclude that the project's technical, administrative and managerial constraints have been successfully overcome. If the outputs, in turn, had the anticipated effect at the immediate objective level, the hypotheses underlying the project probably were valid and appropriate. If, on the other hand, there have been significant deviations from expectations, the reasons need to be determined. They might be the result of technical, administrative or managerial problems, a faulty hypothesis, an unexpected external factor, or an incorrect assumption;

(v) unanticipated effects, i.e is the project having any significant unexpected effects, whether beneficial or detrimental? Despite the best efforts of planners, projects often have unexpected results very often because of the uncertain socio-economic context in which they operate. The process of periodic evaluation provides the occasion for identifying major unexpected factors and, in the case of continuing projects, considering appropriate action to maximize (or minimize) these effects. Is there any evidence of unanticipated effects which should be considered in planning future projects?

(vi) identification of alternatives, i.e is there, or could there have been, a more effective or more efficient way to approach the problem being addressed by this project? Problems can be addressed in a number of ways. While it is perhaps unreasonable to expect management to opt for a different strategy during a project's implementation, the question of alternative approaches to a given problem should certainly receive serious thought as a project nears its end. Based on past experience, which approach to the problem might have met with greater success or could have been achieved at lower cost? This information will be especially valuable when follow-up activities or similar problems elsewhere are being considered;

(vii) causality, i.e what factors affected the performance of the project? By now, the review will have considered a large number of factors which have either contributed to advancing or retarding progress of the project. Their identification is indispensable for deriving short range and long-rage benefits from the exercise. The participants in the review are called upon to determine for each factor whether performance has been negative, as anticipated or superior, and also indicate if the factor has played an important role in project performance. All factors judged to be not applicable should be so marked. Pertinent factors which do not appear on the evaluation checklist (see Appendix, page 32) should be added as should any clarifying or explanatory comments. Analysis of these factors may prove difficult since the members of the evaluation team are likely to have different perspectives. Nonetheless, the analysis could have beneficial effect. It can be argued that factors affecting the performance of a particular project will usually depend on the unique set of circumstances which are not likely to recur. However, if aggregating the data

shows that the same problems crop up in a wide range of projects, then future planning must take these into account.

(viii) sustainability, i.e. what is the likelihood that benefits will be sustained after the withdrawal of external support? This area of enquiry is primarily concerned with impact questions; in other words, one should look into whether the generated changes in a particular situation will be durable after the project completion. There are at least two factors which are crucial in this respect, namely the long-run commitments of the institutions and target groups concerned and the availability of local funds for the continuation of action initiated by the project. This alone signifies a need for technical cooperation projects to fit into national policies and programmes, and further to link the project objectives to the development priorities of the country (as expressed by both the government and local NGO's). In this way, the risk of wasting international aid resources may be reduced.

Once the evaluation data have been collected and analyzed, the preparation of the report becomes the next step which includes drawing over-all conclusions, pointing out to needs to revise the project design and formulating recommendations as well as identifying the lessons learned from the project evaluated.

Conclusion

As shown above, monitoring and evaluation questions cannot be meaningfully addressed in isolation from formulation and design questions. After having recognised that a good design constitutes a clearer guide for implementation and a better basis for evaluation, the ILO has been concentrating efforts on the improvement of project and programme formulation for more than a decade. However, it has become clear that a good design does not guarantee success. Further, the systematic application of design and evaluation guidelines and the results of evaluation exercises have shown that a major problem area remains largely neglected: insufficient and inadequate planning of programmes and projects, comprising the functions of identification, preparation and appraisal. New efforts are being made in this direction within the framework of the Active Partnership Policy which aims at bringing the ILO closer to its social partners at the country level by strengthening its field structure. In this context, the effective use of lessons learned from evaluation has become more crucial than ever before.

Evaluation of operational activities

Appendix

Evaluation Checklist

I. Background

In this section, briefly describe the setting of the project followed by information on its size (budget), when the project became operational, scheduled length of the project, past major revisions and the date and major findings of the last evaluation, if any.

II. Scope and purpose of evaluation

In the same manner as the objectives of a project determine the activities which are undertaken to implement it, so the purpose of an evaluation should presumably determine the questions which it is expected to address. In this section, describe the reasons for undertaking the evaluation, such as consideration being given to the extension, expansion, reduction, replication or reorientation of the project, to address specific problems, make an input to a broader programme evaluation, identify lessons learned or to respond to a donor requirement. In most instances, it is often a good idea to add something along the following lines: the mission should feel free to review all steps in the formulation and implementation of the project and make such recommendations as it deems appropriate.

III. Aspects to be addressed (illustrative and non exhaustive)

Besides the general scope and purpose statement, the terms of reference need to identify the specific aspects of the project which need to be addressed. This is the heart of the terms of reference which will determine what will be covered in the final report.

1) Project implementation

(a) timeliness and quantity of inputs provided;

(b) activities undertaken;
(c) outputs produced or likely to be produced;
(d) compliance with the prerequisites and prior obligations;
(e) project strategy - have there been major changes in the strategy followed during the project life? if so, why?
(f) management - what, if any, have been the management problems encountered in the course of the project?
(g) administrative support and backstopping - what, if any, have been the administrative support and backstopping problems encountered in the course of the project?
(h) assumptions/external factors - to what extent have assumptions pertaining to implementation factors identified in the project document proved to be valid? have unexpected events favoured or delayed the provision of inputs, undertaking of activities or production of outputs? were these events unique or might they have been anticipated?

2) Project performance

In order to warrant being called an evaluation, questions (a) to (f) below must as a minimum be specifically addressed in every case:

(a) immediate objective achievement - effectiveness; to what extent has the project achieved, or is it likely to achieve its immediate objectives?

(b) achievement of immediate objective indicators/success criteria as compared to plan;

(c) actual or potential impact: to what extent has the project had, or is it likely to have, an impact on the target group and on the broader development objective?

(d) project relevance: was the project appropriate at the time it was started? in the light of the conditions prevailing at the time of the evaluation, does the project continue to make as much sense as when it was conceived?

(e) efficiency: do the actual or anticipated project results continue to justify the cost? is there a reasonable relationship between costs and benefits?

(f) are there now, or are there likely to be any important unanticipated effects, either positive or negative?

(g) to what extent are the assumptions/external factors which underlie the project still valid? if not, how are they likely to affect the achievement of the objective(s)?

(h) are there any obvious alternative approaches to the problem(s) being addressed by the project? is there now, or would there have been, a more effective or more efficient way to approach the problem?

(i) identify factors affecting project performance - causality;

(j) project-specific factors: to the extent that they have not been already covered above, identify performance factors which are specific to the project being evaluated and about which information is needed in order to obtain a clear understanding of its achievements. These might include: investment linkages, linkages to and performance of other (related) projects, untilization of technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC), performance of specific (key) sub-units, actions undertaken (and results) on the basis of problems identified in previous reviews and evaluations, tripartism etc.

(k) likelihood that benefits will be sustained after the withdrawal of external support.

3) Cultural and socio-economic factors

Is the project having, or is it likely to have, an effect on cultural and socio-economic aspects (other than those directly intended), such as: the status of women, or other sub-groups, the status of disadvantaged groups (other than intended beneficiaries), shifts in patterns of work (including domestic work), security of food supply, physical security, kinship and family structure, human rights, leisure and its enjoyment, popular participation.

4) Project design

The quality of the project design may have a profound effect on the implementation process and on evaluation.

In regard to project implementation, is/was the project design logical and coherent, e.g are the linkages (between inputs, activities, outputs and objectives) underlying the design appropriate and reasonable? Is there a clear delineation, in the case of institution-building projects, as to what the project is expected to

undertake and what the institution will be expected to do as a result of the project; and have key assumptions/external factors been identified?

As far as the design's utility as a basis for the evaluation is concerned, is it clear and precise in its description of the objectives and the target group; are project activities and outputs to be produced listed in sufficient detail; and are the indicators/success criteria appropriate to the objective(s) and are the necessary data available?

IV. Findings and recommendations

Under this section, the terms of reference should identify the sort of findings and recommendations which the final report is expected to provide. Since this section presumably will largely determine the value of the entire exercise, careful attention needs to be given to the identification of findings and recommendations. For example,

i) project objectives: what, if any, changes are necessary or desirable in the project objectives? what changes of indicators of project achievement are called for? comparing the final project accomplishments with initial objectives, to what extent have the latter been actually achieved? have the objectives remained basically the same throughout the project?

ii) project implementation: what, if any, actions or changes are necessary or desirable in connection with project implementation, i.e inputs to be provided, activities to be undertaken or outputs to be produced?

iii) project performance: what, if any, actions or changes are necessary or desirable to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of the project?

iv) project strategy: are there any recommendations of a general nature regarding the strategy to be followed in similar projects in the future?

v) management: what recommendations can be made to improve management of this, or future, project(s)?

vi) administrative support and backstopping: what recommendations are made to various UN agencies or governments to improve support and backstopping of this or future project(s)?

vii) external conditions: what particular conditions or events should be specifically considered in planning future projects of the same type or in the same area (country)?

viii) general comments: on the basis of the experience with the project, what factors not covered above should be kept in mind in planning future projects of this type or in the same area?

V. Composition of the mission

Under this heading, identify the persons forming part of the evaluation mission. If no national officials are identified, indicate what steps have or will be taken to involve the participating governmental authorities.

VI. Timetable

This section should reflect a detailed schedule of work including meetings/consultations etc.

VII. Contacts

Identify individuals or groups from different offices with whom the mission is expected to consult.

VIII. Final report

Specify the nature of the report to be prepared, i.e whether it is to be in draft or in final form, clearance procedures, reviewing mechanism, approval mechanism, follow-up.

Lessons Learned

An important aspect of evaluation methodology is the feedback process whereby the results of an evaluation lead to improvements in the planning, programming, budgeting and managing of programmatic activities.

ILO points out that "if recommendations from evaluations of previous phases of a project are not taken into consideration when planning a further phase, problems may be carried forward indefinitely" ±/.

It is not surprising therefore to find that the Evaluation System of ILO has a component which systematically derives 'lessons learned'. The following are illustrative examples:

- "institutional development projects are generally more cost-effective than direct support projects, because in the long run they are likely to reach alarger number of beneficiaries"±/;

- "factors found to be contributing to the failure ofprojects included in the initial desk review were:

  - high turnover of national and international staff;
  - frequent changes in government officials;
  - premature departure of international experts;
  - UNDP financial cuts;
  - experts carrying out the counterparts' work;
  - bad project design;
  - difficult working relationship between national staff and experts;
  - lack of government funds;
  - diverse level of education of training teams;
  - budget reductions and the retention of original objectives;
  - national staff's low level of technical skills" ±/

±/Lessons Learned 1990/1991. EVALUATION HIGHLIGHTS No. 3/1991. Evaluation Unit, ILO.

PROGEVAL

In 1986 the Evaluation Unit of ILO set up the PROGEVAL Database which is currently maintained by the Project and Programme Evaluation Information Centre.

The aim of PROGEVAL is to assist project management in the design and implementation of projects by providing efficient and rapid retrieval of evaluation information and by extracting and disseminating the lessons learned from selected evaluation reports.

PROGEVAL comprises some 1,400 bibliographic references dating from the early 1980s covering:

- external and internal evaluation reports from technical cooperation projects executed by the ILO;

- ILO programme evaluation reports and thematic studies;

- other UN agency and non-UN agency reports which are relevant;

- evaluation guidelines and documents on methodological approaches.

The Evaluation Unit also publishes the 'ILO Evaluation Highlights', which summarizes the evolution of projects, the findings of evaluation missions and the lessons learned.

For <u>further information</u> on PROGEVAL and <u>how to access it</u>, contact Evaluation Unit, ILO, CH-1211 Geneva, Fax: 41-22-798-8685.

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EVALUATION NEWS

ESCWA

The Central Evaluation Unit in cooperation with the Training Service will be conducting a workshop */ on self-evaluation methodologies at Amman, Jordan, from 7 to 11 June 1993 for the benefit of programme managers of ESCWA who, during the current biennium, will be undertaking self-evaluation of its subprogrammes on industrial development, natural resources and public administration and finance.

ESCAP

The evaluation functions have now been made an integral part of the Programme Coordination and Monitoring Office (PCMO).

Strengthening of evaluation system in ECLAC

A workshop on evaluation techniques was conducted at ECLAC from 11 to 14 August 1992 with assistance from Central Evaluation Unit. As a result of the training exercise, ECLAC now has the necessary 'critical mass' of officials well versed in evaluation techniques to launch a comprehensive plan to meet the self evaluation requirements and contribute to in-depth evaluations undertaken by the Central Evaluation Unit.

The substantive divisions now have evaluation focal points. One of the most critical skills learned during the workshop was the technique of 'citation analysis' of all relevant data bases. It is expected that ECLAC would be in a better position to ensure that its products and services have the necessary visibility. An institutional decision was taken in terms of actively seeking reviews for ECLAC's major publications in specialized magazines and newspapers in the Latin American and Caribbean region as well as outside.

The study designs, which were prepared in the context of the training workshop on evaluation, were discussed with the supervisors in each section, and developed as needed. Based on these, several evaluation projects have been launched. In effect, ECLAC is seeing its first major effort at implementing self evaluation exercises on a comprehensive scale.

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One of the difficulties encountered so far is the slow rate of response to the evaluation instruments in use. It is expected that this deficiency would be remedied as the evaluation process is strengthened and an enhanced understanding of the benefits of evaluation exercises is acquired. The results of the first round of self evaluation exercises should be available by mid-1993.

In the in-depth evaluation area, ECLAC has recently contributed to the triennial evaluation review on human settlements and is prepared to take part at in-depth evaluation exercises for the regional components of the programmes on international trade, statistics and environment.

ECLAC now has a self-evaluation schedule for the six-year period corresponding to the current 1992-1997 medium term plan with detailed implementation phases. It is expected that the results of several self evaluation exercises would serve as inputs for the forthcoming in-depth evaluation exercises.

ECLAC has thus significanly improved its evaluation machinery so as to be in tune with the requirements set out in the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

***/The Central Evaluation Unit conducts one week workshops on evaluation methodology for any United Nations Department or Office requesting this service.**

CPC Thirty-third session

During the first part of its thirty-third session to be held from 10 to 14 May, CPC will among other things be looking at evaluation as one of the components under programme questions. More specifically, CPC will be looking at the following:

- report on the in-depth evaluation of the programme on the international protection of and assistance to refugees: UNHCR (E/AC.51/1993/2);

- progress report on the in-depth evaluation of the programme on the international protection of and assistance to refugees: UNRWA (E/AC.51/1993/3);

- report on the triennial review of the major programme on human settlements (E/AC.51/1993/4);

- report on the follow-up to the triennial review of the human rights programme (E/AC.51/1993/5), and

- note by the Secretariat on topics for future in-depth evaluations (E/AC.51/1993/6).

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47th Session of the General Assembly

The General Assembly among other things adopted resolution 47/214 on Programme planning; more specifically, in its Section III on Programme Evaluation in the United Nations, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the assessment of evaluation activities and proposals for strengthening the role of evaluation (i.e A/47/116) and endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of CPC at its thirty-second session on this item and urged the Secretary-General to improve the methodology for self-evaluation. In its Section V dealing with other matters, the General Assembly recalled its resolutions 46/185B of 20 December 1991 in which it endorsed the recommendations of CPC at its thirty-first session (A/46/16) to establish a system of responsibility and accountability of programme managers of the United Nations and endorsed the recommendations of CPC in paragraphs 44 (Part I) and 245 (Part II) of its report (A/47/16 (Parts I and II) and Add.1) and invited the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session on the establishment of such a system.

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Evaluation and Management Consultancy

Schubert and Management

A well-known firm of management consultants was commissioned to advise on the commercial difficulties of a famous symphonic orchestra.

Part of the report dealt with a concert performance by the Orchetra of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony. The comments of the consultants read as follows:

(a) for considerable periods, four above players had nothing to do. The number in this section should be reduced and their work spread over the whole orchestra, thus eliminating peaks of inactivity;

(b) all twelve violins were playing identical notes. This seems to be unnecessary duplication and the staff in this section should be drastically cut. If a large volume of sound is really required, it could be obtained through an electronic amplifier;

(c) much effort was absorbed in the playing of demi-semi-quavers. This appears to be an excessive refinement and it is recommended that all notes should be rounded up to the nearest semi-quaver. If this were done, it would be possible to use trainees and low-grade operators;

(d) no useful purpose is served by repeating with horns the passage that has already been handled by strings. If all such redundant passages were eliminated, the concert could be reduced from two hours to twenty minutes;

(e) finally, if Schubert had attended to all these matters, he would probably have been able to finish the symphony.

(Source: Address of Hugh Corbet, Director of the Trade Policy Research Centre, on 'Prospects for Reducing Protectionism' to the Overseas Committee of the Confederation of British Industry, London, 15 March 1984)

New Evaluation System at ILO

A major revision of the evaluation system of ILO is under way which will result in (a) an extension of evaluation activities to cover all ILO activities (rather than emphasizing technical cooperation) and (b) the setting up of a more decentralized evaluation system focusing on self-evaluation by programme managers (both at ILO headquarters and in field offices). It is expected that the new evaluation system would be fully operational at the beginning of the implementation of the ILO's 1994-1995 Programme/Budget.

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In-depth Evaluation of UNICEF's External Relations a/

In April 1989 the Executive Board of UNICEF requested an in-depth evaluation of UNICEF's external relations activities and the Executive Director's views on future roles, functions and priorities. The Board requested that the study actively involve Board members, UNICEF National Committees and outside expertise. It emphasized the importance of external relations to improve UNICEF programme delivery and strengthen advocacy, fund raising and mobilization on children's issues.

The resulting report b/ found that during the 1980s external relations activities had become a catalytic, integral and very effective part of UNICEF country programmes and activities everywhere. However, these activities required:

(a) more careful planning to blend them harmoniously into ongoing country programmes and to adapt them to local realities;

(b) firm programme support to sustain them at the country level;

(c) enhanced consultation between governments, National Committees, UNICEF Headquarters and Field Offices;

(d) stronger management, evaluation and feedback processes within the External Relations Group at Headquarters.

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a/ E/1993/18/Add.1, para. 84.
b/ E/ICEF/1990/L.6 The Future Role of UNICEF External Relations (5 March 1990).

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